

January 30, 2003

To: Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Chair  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Don Knabe  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen  
Chief Administrative Officer

**STRATEGIC PLAN FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES TO UNINCORPORATED AREAS:  
PROGRESS REPORT NO. 2**

On July 3, 2001, your Board approved the Strategic Plan for Municipal Services to Unincorporated Areas (UA Strategic Plan). The objective of the UA Strategic Plan is to improve the delivery of, and accountability for, municipal services provided to the unincorporated communities of Los Angeles County. Implementation of the UA Strategic Plan is a collaborative effort of Board offices and County departments. Staff from all levels of the County organization, including field staff and executive management, has participated in the process. The following report is the second status report on the UA Strategic Plan and summarizes the significant activities and accomplishments in this regard in calendar year 2002.

**Strategic Plan Models**

The implementation of the UA Strategic Plan involves individual tasks in a series of action plans contained in the adopted strategic planning models. The strategic plan models are designed to address specific service delivery and accountability approaches and opportunities.

Action plans have been established or are in the process of being established for several of the service models including the Strategic Service and Lead Department Model, Emergency Management Planning and Response Model, and Access Model. Working groups consisting of staff from affected Board offices and key managerial and field staff from participating County departments have managed the effort to develop each individual action plan.

Highlights of the efforts to implement UA Strategic Plan models include:

- The ***Civic Center Facility Model*** is a joint venture by County departments to assemble County municipal services into a single “County Hall” facility or campus setting to increase the convenience and speed of services to the public.

### **Status**

The East Los Angeles Civic Center project is moving ahead on schedule. Construction of the new East Los Angeles Library began on January 2, 2003. Your Board awarded a contract for improvements to the park and lake on January 21, 2003. The existing library facility has been identified as the most feasible location for the “County Hall.” Potential participating departments have completed space utilization surveys that have been used by the architect to draft a preliminary space plan for the “County Hall.” Construction of the “County Hall” will begin after the library has moved into their new building in 2004.

- ***Unincorporated “Islands” Model*** will design and implement strategies for targeted islands to enhance organization and workforce effectiveness in the County, while meeting the needs of the community.

### **Status**

CAO staff in the Office of Unincorporated Area Services and Special Projects (UAS&SP) prepares an analysis of island annexation opportunities on a case-by-case basis as directed by individual Board offices. The analysis performed determines the key financial and operational issues that would be involved in the potential annexation of unincorporated island areas. The San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments continues to demonstrate interest in pursuing strategic island annexations within the San Gabriel Valley.

- The ***Access Model*** will establish a variety of communication and technology mechanisms to increase the access of residents to County municipal services.

## **Status**

**Community Connection:** UAS&SP continues to publish *Community Connection*, a resource and activity guide for the residents of unincorporated Whittier. This magazine-style guide is a collaborative effort of County departments that provide services to the East Whittier, Los Nietos, South Whittier, Sunshine Acres, and West Whittier communities. 30,000 copies of *Community Connection* are produced three times per year. Each issue includes feature stories, community news, and program and facility information. For each edition, over 27,000 copies of the guide are delivered to residents in unincorporated Whittier area. Copies are also distributed to County facilities in the unincorporated Whittier including libraries, parks, and community centers.

**Community Websites:** A prototypical website has been designed for the communities of unincorporated Whittier and East Los Angeles (Note: the East Los Angeles website was previously developed by the Public Library, but has not been updated for more than one year). The websites are being developed through a joint planning effort that includes the Internal Services Department (ISD), Chief Information Officer, and UAS&SP. ISD developed the prototype site based on the design of the County's new Internet portal [www.lacounty.info](http://www.lacounty.info). The "community" website provides local facility and program information, links, forms, and other County services. Once the two prototype websites are up and running, County staff will work with Board offices to provide for additional community-based websites in each Supervisorial District.

**Help Line:** Call volume for the County's toll-free Help Line for unincorporated residents continued to grow in 2002. Subsequent to marketing efforts in June 2002, call volume reached nearly 1,700 calls per month. UAS&SP staff worked with InfoLine, the non-profit information and referral organization that operates the Help Line, to achieve budget reductions by downsizing staff consistent with the projected call volume. In addition, UAS&SP worked with Board offices and InfoLine to resolve customer service issues and promote more effective service protocols.

- The ***Strategic Service Area and Lead Department Model*** will customize a service package to meet the needs of a specific area.

## **Status**

Pilot programs have been initiated in the unincorporated communities of Lennox and Florence-Firestone. County departments and Board offices have provided detailed information related to community issues that have been identified as a result of community meetings and referrals to the Board of Supervisors. Draft action plans are currently being reviewed by the affected Board offices and participating departments. County departments participating in each program will be represented by local field staff and department management. Participating departments will undertake a number of initiatives designed to address specific issues or problem areas within each community. Potential initiatives that have been identified by Board offices include:

**Florence-Firestone**: criminal activity affecting quality of life, economic development of the commercial corridors, and code enforcement issues related to commercial blight.

**Lennox**: code enforcement issues related to street vending/lunch trucks, proliferation of garage and yard sales, and commercial blight.

- The ***Economic Development and Revitalization Model*** will apply community redevelopment agency concepts and strategies to revitalize target unincorporated communities.

## **Status**

The Board of Supervisors approved the Economic Development Business Incentive Program Board Policy on December 4, 2001. The Business Incentive Program outlined in the Board Policy provides Community Development Commission (CDC) with the flexibility to pursue, with Board approval, appropriate economic development programs that may involve individual projects, targeted commercial/industrial areas, or community investment projects. The Policy provides a process by which CDC can forward economic development projects to the Board of Supervisors for consideration.

During Fiscal Year 2002-03, budgetary uncertainties tempered recommendations from this office with regards to funding economic development efforts in each Supervisorial District. Based on the current status of our proposed budget, it is unlikely that our office would recommend funding of this initiative in Fiscal Year 2003-04. We continue to explore grant opportunities in an effort to fund certain ongoing or planned projects.

**Live Oak Corridor (Monrovia-Arcadia-Duarte):** Public Works initiated efforts to enhance roadway improvements along the Live Oak commercial corridor in the unincorporated community of Monrovia-Arcadia-Duarte. Additional activities are planned in the Live Oak commercial corridor including a survey of business owners to determine the feasibility of forming a business improvement district.

**South Whittier:** CDC, Regional Planning, Public Works, and UAS&SP are also working with the Board of Supervisors to create an action plan to address economic development issues in the unincorporated community of South Whittier. Surveys are also planned to provide information on current and planned commercial activity. Survey results will be utilized to determine potential public-private economic development opportunities.

- The ***Emergency Management Planning and Response Model*** will pilot an emergency management plan and provide training and education to a target unincorporated area of the County.

### **Status**

UAS&SP is working with Board staff, CAO Office of Emergency Management, County departments, and community leaders and volunteer organizations to initiate the process of developing an emergency management plan for the unincorporated community of Topanga. The plan also requires collaboration with local schools, Red Cross, and various State and Federal agencies.

Meetings have been held with community stakeholders and volunteer groups that are currently organized to provide local emergency preparedness and response. Participants are gathering and documenting existing plans and reports that will be integrated into the proposed community emergency plan. A workshop is being planned to introduce the process and gather input from additional community groups, service providers, and other government agencies.

### **Community Services Task Force**

The Community Services Task Force was formed to promote the County's Strategic Plan Goal No. 6 for coordinated, responsive services to the County's unincorporated communities by facilitating and accelerating the development and implementation of effective, integrated services through community involvement and removing institutional

and operational barriers. The Community Services Task Force will assume policy leadership for implementing the UA Strategic Plan. The Task Force is comprised of department heads, or their representatives, from Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures, Animal Care and Control, Chief Administrative Office, Chief Information Office, Community Development Commission, Community and Senior Services, Consumer Affairs, County Counsel, District Attorney, Fire, Health Services, Natural History Museum, Office of Public Safety, Parks and Recreation, Public Library, Public Works, Regional Planning, Sheriff, and Treasurer and Tax Collector.

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

In addition to strategic planning activities, UAS&SP continues to provide staff support for various Board motions, referrals, and initiatives related to unincorporated communities throughout Los Angeles County. The workload associated with annexations, detachments, boundary changes, and other governmental organization activities has also increased due to the decentralization of certain responsibilities previously administered by the Local Agency Formation Commission. Additionally, UAS&SP is facilitating a process to enhance the land development process in Los Angeles County through the formation of the Land Development Task Force. This initiative arose as a result of the La Vina Land Development Project Review.

The County continues to achieve significant progress with regards to the implementation of several of the UA Strategic Plan models. Action plans and detailed work plans currently underway will provide the foundation to pursue several new initiatives in 2003. In an effort to keep your Board updated on the progress of the implementation efforts, I will provide your Board with an annual progress report of the UA Strategic Plan in January 2004.

I have attached a summary of the action plans for the strategic planning models discussed in this report. If you have any questions or comments regarding this report, please call me, or your staff may contact Lari Sheehan at (213) 974-1174.

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Attachment

c: Department Heads

## ACTION PLANS FOR DELIVERING MUNICIPAL SERVICES TO UNINCORPORATED AREAS

**Action Plan A - Civic Center Facility Model:** County municipal services are assembled into a single facility or campus setting. County departments housed in the Civic Center work collaboratively as a joint venture to increase the convenience and speed of services under a single Civic Center manager, who is accountable for service levels and overall outcomes at the Civic Center. The housed departments cooperate in establishing policies and procedures that minimize the duplication of paperwork and sequential visits required of customers. Services are further enhanced by technology, particularly for departments that cannot maintain a full-time presence at the Civic Center. Non-profit organizations may be included in the joint ventures and as tenants.

**Supportive of County Goals:**

- ☐ **Service Excellence** to provide convenient services within available resources
- ☐ **Fiscal Responsibility** to invest in public infrastructure
- ☐ **Organizational Effectiveness** to collaborate across functional and jurisdictional boundaries

**Objective A1:** Pilot at least one Civic Center facility model in an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County in FY 2004-2005. \*

**Objective A2:** Determine if the Civic Center facility model in an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County can significantly improve customer satisfaction levels of municipal services in FY 2005-2006. \*

**Objective A3:** Determine if the Civic Center facility model for municipal services can be replicated in other unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County in FY 2005-2006. \*

\* Note: Dates are subject to change based on actual progress of the capital project.

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**Action Plan B - “Make-Buy-Sell-Annex” for Unincorporated “Islands”<sup>1</sup> Model:** The County determines whether it is most effective to provide services internally or through others, or to expand its services to include more surrounding communities to create a critical mass. If the services could be provided more cost-effectively by others, especially surrounding incorporated areas; the County would negotiate contracts for those services. The heart of this analysis is service costs, particularly if the same or better services can be delivered at lower costs.

In mature communities that have a distinct identity and want to become a City, the County might present such options as incorporating with full local provision of services, contracting with the County or another city for services, etc. Others may choose to remain unincorporated with enhanced services. Yet others may want to be annexed to existing cities. The County remains a flexible service provider, committed to meeting community needs.

**Supportive of County Goals:**

- ☐ **Service Excellence** to design seamless “one County” service delivery systems within available resources and evaluate services based on results
- ☐ **Fiscal Responsibility** to manage effectively the resources we have and increase public-private partnerships
- ☐ **Organizational Effectiveness** to collaborate across functional and jurisdictional boundaries

**Objective B1:** Optimize municipal services by analyzing the cost-effectiveness of at least three candidate islands and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors by the end of FY 2001-2002.

**Objective B2:** Implement the recommended island strategies by the end of FY 2002-2003.

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<sup>1</sup> Unique areas of small, unincorporated land masses have been created, often as a result of incorporations or annexations. They have a variety of uses, including housing and special County facilities, and may be the result of deliberate gerrymandering by adjacent communities. Some appear as map anomalies. They are inherently difficult to provide services to, as they often involve sending staff across neighboring cities to respond to community needs.

**Action Plan C - Access Model:** The County establishes a variety of communications mechanisms to increase access for communities in the County of Los Angeles. Some of these mechanisms include:

- ☐ Toll free telephone numbers (e.g., Help Line and Report Line)
- ☐ Community activity guides and directories
- ☐ Web Sites, including expansion and customization to specific communities
- ☐ Cable TV

**Supportive of County Goals:** ☐ **Service Excellence** to design seamless “one County” service delivery systems and evaluate services based on results

**Objective C1:** Increase community residents’ access to needed municipal services and information by expanding at least 3 communication modalities (e.g., toll free telephone numbers, guides and directories, Internet/Intranet, or Web Sites) by January 2003.

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**Action Plan D - Strategic Service Area and Lead Department Models:** The County identifies service needs by customer segments and customizes service packages to meet them. County departments enter into a joint venture to provide services, combining functions to make the best use of staff assigned to the area. Joint ventures could involve County agencies as well as Councils of Government (COGs) and non-profit organizations. The County makes extensive use of technology (e.g., computer terminals at libraries or mobile units, kiosks, call centers, Web Sites) to extend services where few permanent facilities exist. If justified, small local facilities might be established to provide convenient community service centers. In some instances, a lead department may be appointed for an unincorporated area. This model builds upon the County’s efforts already in place with the Town Sheriff model, task forces, Nuisance Abatement Teams, etc.

**Supportive of County Goals:** ☐ **Service Excellence** to design seamless “one County” service delivery systems within available resources and evaluate services based on results  
☐ **Organizational Effectiveness** to implement strategic management processes, improve internal operations, and collaborate across functional and jurisdictional boundaries

**Objective D1:** Implement a service strategic area in at least one urban or exurb community by the end of FY 2002-2003.

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**Action Plan E - Economic Development and Revitalization Model:** This model applies the community redevelopment agency concepts and municipal economic development, strategies, initiatives, and programs to County unincorporated communities.

**Supportive of County Goals:** ☐ **Service Excellence** to design seamless “one County” service delivery systems within available resources and evaluate services based on results  
☐ **Fiscal Responsibility** to manage effectively the resources we have and increase public-private partnerships

**Objective E1:** Define the County’s Policy relative to economic development in unincorporated communities by September 2001.

**Objective E2:** Develop and implement a program to pilot the Policy in one to three target-unincorporated communities by June 2004.



**Action Plan F - Emergency Management Planning for Unincorporated Areas/County Communities:** County unincorporated communities do not have formal community-specific emergency management plans or involvement on disaster management areas, committees, or task forces. To close this gap in critical community-based disaster planning and readiness, one community will be selected for purposes of piloting a partnership between the County and the community to establish a stakeholder group and prepare an emergency management plan responsive to the community's perceived emergency services needs. The plans will include pre-disaster education programs and post-disaster coordination, which will strengthen the community's ability to withstand and recover from a disaster. The plan will be a model that can be used to implement emergency management plans in other unincorporated communities.

**Supportive of County Goals:**

- ☐ **Service Excellence** to design seamless "one County" service delivery systems delivery within available resources
- ☐ **Fiscal Responsibility** to invest in public systems and infrastructure that promote disaster resistant County communities
- ☐ **Organizational Effectiveness** to collaborate across functional and jurisdictional boundaries

**Objective F1:** Determine appropriate community groups and other stakeholders that can band together as a planning task force for purposes of preparing, with County assistance, the community's emergency management plans and sponsoring community education and training by November 2001.

**Objective F2:** Pilot preparation and implementation of an emergency management plan for one unincorporated community by July 2003.

**Objective F3:** Determine the method of including the unincorporated community in the planning and communications systems of the Operational Area<sup>2</sup> by July 2003.

**Objective F4:** Expand the model to other unincorporated County communities by 2004.

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<sup>2</sup>The Los Angeles County Operational Area includes county government and all cities and other local governments within County borders. This includes special districts like public school districts, sanitation districts, water districts, etc. The Operational Areas is part of the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) law passed in 1995. The County is the leader of the Operational Area.